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ABSTRACT

In constructing a syllabus for the teaching of Modern Greek as a foreign language to English-speaking students, it is suggested that some lexical items be taught from the corpus of Greek loan words in English. These words fall into the following categories: direct loans; words that, in joining English, have acquired a different meaning, which was subsequently introduced into Modern Greek; words borrowed from Ancient Greek, used as a basis for scientific terminology, and returned to Modern Greek; and blends formed by a Greek loan and an English word. One technique for introducing loan words is designed to help the learner of Greek overcome discouragement, a common response to phonological, syntactical, and orthographic differences. First, loan words are selected and graded according to language proficiency level, and dialogues incorporating them are written. Words may be selected to correspond to student interests and needs. The technique promotes examination and understanding of both Greek and English, enhances lexical memory, and may also be linked to the teaching of culture. Teachers are cautioned to be aware of the morphological, phonological, and semantic problems inherent in loan words. (MSE)

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GREEK LOANS IN ENGLISH AND THE TEACHING OF MODERN GREEK TO ENGLISH SPEAKING STUDENTS (WITHIN A COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING FRAMEWORK)*

The aim of this paper is to suggest certain ways in which the native or non-native teacher of Modern Greek can use the phenomenon of Greek loans in English in order to achieve better results in his teaching. Of course this technique can be used for the teaching of Modern Greek to speakers of other languages as well. However, in this paper, we will be adducing and discussing examples of Greek loans only in English and throughout our discussion we take into consideration students for whom English is their mother tongue, as well as students who have an adequate knowledge of the English language. The suggestions we make here are intented for adult learn-

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ers of Modern Greek who have had at least high-school education and this is the case with the typical student of the School of Modern Greek in the University of Thessaloniki.

A loan is a linguistic unit (usually a lexical item) which is used, with or without changes in a language or dialect other than the one where it originated (Crystal 1980: 214). Greek loans in English passed during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, when English felt the need to enrich its vocabulary in various fields. This was mostly done through Latin which had already been influenced by Greek.

Greek loans in English can be distinguished in four groups according to the loan process which has been followed for their production. Consider the examples in (1)a-d:

(1) a. Loan words, e.g.:

A.G[1].[ˈθeatron][2] > E. theatre = M.G. [ˈθeatro]

A.G. [xoˈros] > E. chorus = M.G. [xoˈros]$_1$ chorus

[xoˈros]$_2$ dance

b. Words which have passed into English, acquired a new meaning which was introduced into Modern Greek, e.g.:

A.G. [fandastiˈkos] > E. fantastic >

M.G. [fandastiˈkos]$_2$ marvellous, wonderful

[fandastiˈkos]$_1$ imaginary

c. Words which were borrowed from Ancient Greek and

were used as the base in order to cover the needs in various scientific fields as far as terminology was concerned. The new words were introduced into Greek, e.g.:

A.G. [ˈfariŋks] > E. pharyngitis >

M.G. [fariˈŋgitiða]

d. Loan blends which are formed by a Greek loan and an English word, e.g.:

A.G. [miˈkros] + E.computer > E.microcomputer >

M.G. [mikrokoˈmpçuter]

For our purposes in class we use these loans without particular reference to each group and here we will be using them in the same way.

When an English speaking student first comes into contact with Modern Greek he runs the risk of panicking. First, as far as spoken language is concerned, he faces difficulties due to the phonological and syntactic differences between the two languages. Second, when the student is faced with the written language the different alphabet as well as the spelling may discourage him.

Today we would like to present to you what we call a "technique" which can help the foreign learner of Modern Greek to overcome this stage and in later stages in his learning career to teach him how to benefit from the phenomenon of Greek loans in English by developing the skill of recognizing them and even attempting to produce them himself. There is also one more area where the loans can be of use and this is the teaching of aspects of Greek

culture by discussing the origin of certain loans appearing in dialogues and texts and which are related to Greek Mythology, History, Philosophy, as well as Ancient Greek names of people and places.

During the first stages in the student's learning the idea is to expose him to those Greek loans which he is already familiar with in English, by picking a relatively large number of the lexical items which he is to be taught from among these loans, within a communicative language teaching framework. These lexical items are carefully selected and graded according to the level at which they are to be taught. Consider the examples in (2)a-l.

2a.	[ˈprovlima] problem	g.	[mixaˈni] machine
b.	[fotoɣraˈfia] photograph	h.	[ˈklima] climate
c.	[muˈsio] museum	i.	[ˈcendro] centre
d.	[istoˈria] history	j.	[ˈmetro] metre
e.	[ˈmeθoðos] method	k.	[ˈsistima] system
f.	[feˈnomeno] phenomenon	l.	[miˈstirio] mystery

The two short dialogues that follow in (3) and (4), and which in class are accompanied by two relevent sketches, can be part of a communicative syllabus.

(3)	[ˈenas ðiˈaloɣos sto peˈriptero]	A dialogue at the kiosk.
	A. [ˈexete tiˈlefono;]	A. Have you got a phone?
	B. [ne aˈpo ci]	B. Yes, it's over there.
	A. [iˈparçi ce kaˈtaloɣos;]	A. Have you also got a tetephone directory?
	B. [ˈine ðipla sto tiˈlefono]	B. It's next to the phone.

A. [efxari´sto po´li]	A. Thank you very much
(4) [sto ti´lefono]	On the telephone
A. [e´leni, ´ime o ´aris]	A. Eleni, this is Aris.
B. [a jasu. a´po ´pu tilefo´nis; a´po ´θalamo;]	B. Oh hello. Where are you calling from? From a telephone booth?
A. [´oçi a´po pe´riptero. ´Kseris ðen ´exo to ´proγrama. Ti ´ora ´exume ´maθima to a´poγevma;]	A. No, from a kiosk. You see, I haven´t got the time-table. What time are we having a class this afternoon?
B. [stis ´teseris]	B. At four.
A. [efxari´sto po´li. ja xa´ra]	A. Thank you very much. So long.
B. [jasu, ´ari]	B. So long, Aris.

They are presented under the general notion Communication and the more particular one Inter-personal Communication. The first may serve for the teaching of the function Asking for Something and the second for the function Making a Phonecall and Inquiring Information on the Phone.

The first dialogue contains two loans [ti´lefono] (telephone) and [ka´taloγos] (telephone directory), as well as the word [ðia´loγos] (dialogue) of the title. On learning the word [ti´lefono] the student is very likely to recognize its English equivalent, remember it and reproduce it more easily and consequently use it in order to communicate. These loans may also be used as the basis for in-

troducing the corresponding groups of neuter and masculine nouns. Words having phonological similarities to the ones mentioned above may be elicited from the students here. Thus from [ti'lefono] we can have [mi'krofono] (microphone) and from [ka'taloγos] and [ðχi'aloγos], we can have [mo'noloγos] (monologue) and [e'piloγos] (epilogue).

We go through the same process with the word ['proγrama] (time table) of the second dialogue. The adjective [tilefoni'kos] derived from the verb [tilefo'no] (to telephone) which appears in the dialogue is also presented here together with the nouns [ka'taloγos] of the first dialogue and ['θalamos] of the second and thus we have [tilefoni'kos ka'taloγos] (telephone directory) and [tilefoni'kos 'θalamos] (telephone booth). The other meanings of the polysemous word [ka'taloγos] will be dealt with in later units of such a syllabus.

A quite useful activity that can be introduced here is the practice of reading from an actual telephone directory through certain tasks that are given to the students such as looking up in the directory and saying people's names, their telephone numbers and addresses.

In the designing of a syllabus, words that have already been introduced can be used as references for the presentation of other lexical items derived or related to them. For example from [ti'lefono] we can present the noun [fo'ni] (voice) and the verb [fo'nazo] (to call or shout) and from ['proγrama] we may have the noun ['γrama] (letter) and the verb ['γrafo] (to write).

In addition to the advantages this technique provides, that is the fact that students recognize and thus remember more easily the lexical items, we have made the following observation: On hearing the word [ˈanθropos] (human being) for example, in context of course, the students are likely to make the connection with the English word anthropology and thus deduce its meaning. Consider the examples in (5).

(5) a. [ˈanθropos] human being ⟶ anthropology
b. [viˈvlio] book ⟶ bibliography
c. [leksiˈko] dictionary ⟶ lexicography

The technique we have presented so far can be repeated in a similar way according to our students' needs and interests, thus helping them to enter into the "mysteries", we could say, of the Greek language in a smoother way.

The ability of the students to think in the way our technique requires depends on the degree of their knowledge of English, also on the experience they have had in the learning of other foreign languages. So some of them may discover the technique themselves, others may need, to a certain extent, a cue from the teacher in order to be able to think in this way. Whichever the case may be, once the students have become aware that it works, they use it and feel quite happy about it.

At a more advanced level we quide our students through the stages of analysis to a better understand-

ing of the mechanisms of the language. As a consequence they become more aware of English itself.

To illustrate this let us take the Greek preposition [a´ndi], which dates back to the time of Homer, and which as a prefix has passed in English expressing the idea of "opposition". This preposition has in Greek the following meanings: "in opposition to something", "in return to", or "made in answer to", or "instead of" and "corresponding". Let us now consider the examples in (6):

(6) a.	[a´ndiθesi]	antithesis
b.	[andisilipti´ko]	contraceptive
c.	[anθijii´nos]	unhealthy
d.	[ande´piθesi]	counter attack
e.	[andi´proeδros]	vice president
f.	[andimeto´pizo]	confront
g.	[andisti´xo]	correspond

From these examples it follows that the Greek prefix [a´ndi] corresponds to the English prefixes anti-, counter-, vice-, contra-, and more rarely to un- and co -.

Such an analysis initiates the student into the strategy of recognizing Greek words beginning with [a´ndi] and even producing such words himself. For example, a student who already knows the word [´iroas] (hero) in Greek is more likely to be able to produce the word [andi´iroas] (antihero).

In addition to this, students become more sensi-

tive to English itself since they become aware of the derivation of words as we can see from the examples in (7):

(7) a. E. psychotherapy < G. [psi´çi]+ [θera´pia]
psyche, soul therapy

b. Enterobioform < G. [´endero]
intestine

In our introduction we mentioned that by discussing the origin of certain loans we can teach aspects of Greek culture as well, as it follows from the examples in (8) and (9):

(8) a. [aɣo´ra] market
b. [aθli´tis] athlete
c. [i´kona] picture, image, icon
d. [cini´kos] cynical
e. [mu´sio] museum
f. [nostal´jia] nostalgia
g. [´nimfi] nymph
h. [pani´kos] panic
i. [´staðio] stadium
j. [si´mbosio] symposium
k. [´tiranos] tyrant
l. [psi´çi] psyche, soul

(9) a. [andi´ɣoni] Antigone
b. [peri´klis] Pericles
c. [ari´stiðis] Aristides
d. [ðe´lfi] Delphi

e. [oli'mbia] Olympia
f. [kno'sos] Knossos

To illustrate this point let us take the word [pani-'kos] (panic) in (8)h. The students have seen the word in context and have already made the connection with the word in English. Starting from that we explain that the word goes back to Mythology. It originates in the ancient Greek god of the woods Pan who among his other characteristics took pleasure in spreading terror (panic) throughout the peaceful countryside with his screams and the unpleasant or cacophonous, if you like, tunes of his flute (Richepin 1954: 511-524).

From our experience we can assure you that the effect of such explanations on our students is quite an impressive one. At more advanced levels the students are encouraged to do some research and make such presentations in class themselves. The loan which is presented in this way is not only added to the student's knowledge as a lexical item, but also serves as a bridge between Greek language and culture.

So far we have dealt with the positive aspects of the phenomenon of Greek loans in English in connection with the teaching of Modern Greek to English speaking students.

However, a teacher of Modern Greek who attempts to use this technique in his teaching, must be awa-

re not only of the problems that arise from the adaptation of the Greek loans to the phonological and morphological systems of English but also of the semantic problems.

We think that the phonological and morphological problems can be gradually overcome during the various stages of teaching, because they occur regularly.

One might say that our students may run the risk of pronouncing the Greek words according to the pronunciation of their English equivalents, that is they may say [kara'ktiras] instead of [xara'ktiras] in line with the English character or [te'lefono] instead of [ti'lefono] in line with the English telephone. We consider this a minor problem and one that could have occurred even if the teacher had not made the association between the Greek and the English words. Since this technique is suggested for taught courses and not for teach yourself ones, the teacher will always be able to correct and possibly prevent such errors. On the other hand even if this is likely to happen, we think that the benefit that our students get out of this technique, by far outweighs the possible disadvantages.

We consider the difficulties which our students may have on the semantic level the most important ones, irrespective of the stage of learning because of irregularity in their occurrence, as it becomes obvious from the following examples:

(10) a. [xo´ros] < chorus
dance

b. [simfo´nia] < symphony
agreement

c. critical < [kriti´kos]
[´krisimos]

d. G. [e´onas] century
E. aeon period of time too long to be measured

e. G. [kano´nizo] regulate
E. canonize [ajiopi´o]

f. [´xronios] < chronic
habitual

g. [´apofθeγma] < apo(ph)thegm
proverb, saying

h. [apo´kalipsi] < apocalypse
revelation

i. [ipervo´li] < hyperbole
exaggeration

By way of conclusion we would like to make the following suggestion to our colleagues teachers of Modern Greek as a foreign language: In the construction of a syllabus for the teaching of Modern Greek as a foreign language to English speaking students, we suggest that the teacher cover a percentage of the Greek

lexical items to be taught from among the Greek loans in English, always being aware of the problems we mentioned above. Although we recognize that teachers have been doing this to some extent all along, in this paper we have tried to present the benefits of doing it in a more systematic way.

Among the factors that should be taken into consideration in deciding which loans should be taught are: the language level of the class and the needs and interests of the particular students.

The advantages that the technique may offer are the following:

1. Encouragment to the student in the learning of the language as a result of the recognition of familiar words.
2. Help of the student's memory in order that he remember the new lexical items.
3. A better understanding of the mechanisms of the language as far as the production of words is concerned.
4. A bond between Greek language and culture.

NOTES

1. Symbol index
   A.G. Ancient Greek, M.G. Modern Greek, E. English.

2. The phonetic symbols used for the transcription of Greek have been taken from The Principles of the International Phonetic Association. (1981: 32-33).

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